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MEMORIAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

J. F. HANSON,

MACON, GA.,

AT

ANDERSONVILLE, GEORGIA,

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1891.

"I appeal to you to make the future a future of implicit obedience to law, always remembering that upon the integrity of its citizens must rest the safety of the State."

MACON, GA.:
NEWS PUBLISHING COMPANY,
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Dept of Ga.
G. A. R.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Every student of our history must be impressed with the conditions that surround us to-day. We are reminded by the graves of those who perished in its progress, that within the lifetime of the generation to which many of us belong, we have passed through a great civil war. Of its hatreds and bitterness, its sufferings and its wrongs, we have learned from experience, or are informed by tradition. These are happily passed, and save the excitement and tumult of party conflicts, the clash of opposing political forces, the peace that pervades the country is as profound as the undisturbed repose of the dead.

In this large assemblage there are men who fought under the victorious flag of the Union, men who followed the illstarred banner of the Confederacy, and others, still, who are the sons of both, and who were born and have grown to man's estate since the close of the war. There are also present many representatives of that race, which, during the war, was enslaved, though now free, and which without fault or responsibility, has constituted for seventy-five years the political storm centre of the republic.

We should not meet as Northern men or Southern men, as soldiers of the Federal or Confederate armies, as masters or slaves, as white men or black men, but as citizens of a common country, blessed with universal freedom and universal peace, seeking at this shrine of patriotism, to learn from our past history lessons of wisdom and duty for the future.

I did not suppose at the close of the war, that the time would ever come when I could, in full sympathy with Federal soldiers who survived it, bear an humble part in the exercises of a Federal memorial day; but during the eventful years that mark the period from Appomattox in 1865 to Andersonville in 1891, I have learned much that I did not previously know, have

unlearned much that I had been wrongly taught, and have recalled many important historical facts that in moments of passion or despair, were forgotten. In the light of this experience I am here to say to you, to the people of my State, my section, my country and the world, that I no longer regard the men who fought to preserve the Union, which I sought to destroy, or to destroy the Confederacy which I sought to establish, as my enemies. On the contrary, I now regard them as my friends, my benefactors and my brethren, and whatever honors my poor powers can bestow upon them here and now, or elsewhere hereafter, shall be theirs, while my citizenship is blessed by the Union which God, in His providence, was too wise to permit us to destroy.

This sentiment widely prevails in the South, and is not inconsistent with the devotion of the Southern people to the memory of their dead. We have lived to see the storms of passion by which they were tossed subside. We have lived to see our mistake with reference to the value of an institution to which they were unwisely attached. We have lived to learn anew the blessings of a Union which many of them appreciated and loved even unto death, and which they never willingly opposed.

They died mainly in defense of their rights, and in the line of duty, as they understood both. Their patriotism, their fortitude, their valor, sheds lustre upon the Union, and is the common heritage now of all the people of a peaceful and united country. The courage with which they fought, and the fearful cost at which they were overcome, and the priceless value of what they sought to destroy, should admonish us to study well and wisely the causes which lay at the bottom of the great revolution which they sustained with such desperate valor, that it failed at last only through the mercy of God.

Throughout the country, North and South, memorial days, Federal and Confederate, have grown into prominent, if not permanent features of our national and sectional life. They were instituted for the purpose of honoring our countrymen who fell in the war between the States, and to perpetuate on both sides, the history, doctrines, principles and sentiments involved in that great struggle.

With reference to the measure of our duty to those who laid

down their lives in defense of the principles we maintained, and the manner in which we have discharged this duty, we may confidently appeal to the intelligent judgment of mankind. It is to be hoped, however, that the sentimental period that naturally followed the war, and on both sides prevented fair discussion of its issues, ended with the first quarter of a century of our memorial history, and that the time has come when we may, as men, review the past with justice, if not entirely free from prejudice.

In studying the history of the slavery question which caused the war, perfect frankness is essential to just and wise conclusions. Furthermore, the condition of public sentiment, North and South, as well as the factional divisions of the times, must be taken into account. Through partisan agencies and for partisan purposes this history has been grossly perverted, and hence there is an entire misunderstanding with the young men of the country, with reference to the manner in which, through this controversy, the war was produced. We have reached the point where the opinions of men, unsupported by the facts of history, have ceased to be of value in making up an acceptable verdict, if we recognize the effects upon posterity, that the history of this question contained in our official publications is certain to produce. I appeal to this history in support of whatever statements of fact I shall make on this occasion. The causes of the past that cannot be tested by this method will not be justified by history, and those of the present that cannot stand this test will surely perish. It will be necessary to touch the adherents of both sides in tender places, but I am reminded that the surgeon cannot stay the knife, because the delicate flesh of the patient quivers, and that cancerous sores on the body politic, like those of the human body, must be cut out by the roots, or both will become the victims of certain decay and death. False sentiment from false information, and consequently false passion and resentment have been the crowning evils of our past history. In this the cunning hand of the demagogue and the agency of the fanatic have ever been present. Neither have sought in the past and neither desire now the settlement of any question in the interest of peace. Both live and thrive, and derive their chief influence in and from an atmosphere of agitation. This is their stock in trade; their life. Through this they have produced one war, and are keeping alive the baneful spirit of sectionalism, and

unless checked, will involve us in other conflicts. Let us take up the line of history indicated and trace the work of these pestiferous enemies of peace, whether this work relates to the past, the present, or the future.

During the greater part of the period with which we propose to deal, the people of the North were divided into three classes. First, those who were indifferent about slavery; second, those who were opposed to slavery on moral grounds, and also to any interference with it in the States where it existed on account of the constitutional rights of the South in slaves as property, but who were opposed to its further extension into the territories; third, the abolitionists, who were opposed to slavery altogether, and favored by any and all means its total extinction.

In the Southern States there were three classes, that likewise represented the different shades of opinion touching this question. First, those who were opposed to slavery on moral grounds, and questioned the value of the institution in a material point of view; second, those who believed in slavery, but loved the Union more than slavery, and recognizing that much of the opposition to the institution North was based on moral sentiment, were willing to settle its controversies by conciliation and compromise; third, those who were opposed to the Union *per se*; or if not, were nevertheless determined to destroy it in the interest of slavery, and to perpetuate slavery at any and every cost.

The history of the slavery question and its treatment by the confederation, and after the adoption of the Federal Constitution by the United States, is marked by four important epochs prior to the war. The first ended with the adoption of the ordinance of 1787; the second, with the adoption of the Missouri compromise in 1820; the third, with the compromise measures of 1850, and the fourth, with the formal repeal of the Missouri compromise in 1854, and which it was claimed had been practically abrogated by the compromise measures of 1850.

From 1787 to 1854, and certainly until 1850, of the divisions indicated in the North, the first was probably the strongest in point of numbers, while in the South the first was the weaker party. The second was, in both sections, the most conservative; while in both, the third was the most implicable, intolerant and aggressive of all. It is an important fact that should be borne in mind in connection with the slavery controversy and its final

effects upon the country, that the first two classes North and South, while recognizing the gravity of the problem with which they were dealing, never contemplated its settlement by other than legal and just methods; while the third parties North and South were impatient of legal restraint, and were determined to abrogate the Constitution and defy the laws, whenever and wherever either conflicted with the triumph of their principles. Northern abolitionists assailed the property rights of Southern men in the institution of slavery, which rights were guaranteed by our Constitution and laws, and Southern men advocated, as a remedy for this real or imaginary wrong, the disruption of the Union—essential then and now to the prosperity and happiness of the people of the whole country. If there was the force and influence of moral conviction that slavery was wrong on the one hand, or that human rights, which men will always defend, were in jeopardy on the other; moral fanaticism was as impotent to right the one as sectional aggression was to protect the other; and while the abolition crusade against slavery was inspired by moral sentiment, and its defense was carried on as a matter of right, we cannot forget that the fires kindled by fanaticism and fed by sectional hate and bitterness, were not subdued until a continent was drenched with blood.

It is absurd to say that the North or the South was wholly right, or that either was entirely wrong. Both were right in part and wrong in part, and both were responsible for allowing mischievous and aggressive minorities to involve them in a quarrel, which resulted in war, when the question at issue was susceptible, as often demonstrated, of lawful and peaceful settlement.

The conservative and patriotic men of both sections were deeply concerned for the final fate of the Union; while all classes at the South were sentimentally, if not vitally interested in slavery. For this reason, Southern men had two great interests to guard, while their Northern brethren were not forced by their own welfare, to look after but one.

The conservatism of Southern men, like the spirit of justice displayed by Northern men in public life, characterized for a long time their public utterances and actions touching the question of slavery. Both recognized the preservation of the Union as the one object for which all should labor, as the one interest to be maintained above all others, and both saw, in slavery, the

only serious danger that threatened it. While this was true of the convictions of both with reference to the value of the Union in preserving the rights and liberties of the people, the great majority of the South, until the close of the period marked by the compromise measures, which ended with the compromise of 1850, saw that the preservation of the Union was necessary to the defense and perpetuation of slavery.

That the South was not always infatuated with slavery; that she was indifferent at least about its introduction into new territory, is shown by the history of the ordinance of 1787. This ordinance, referring to the territory north and west of the Ohio river, prohibited slavery or involuntary servitude in said territory. Webster, in his reply to Hayne, claimed its authorship for Nathan Dane, of Massachusetts, but Thos. H. Benton, quoted the journals of the Congress of the Confederation to show that it was introduced into Congress by Mr. Jefferson, who, Benton claims, was also its author, and that it was passed by the votes of all the States present, and by all of the votes of each of the States, with one exception, and this was from a Northern State.

In the "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," by Mr. Davis, the following statement occurs, with reference to this important transaction: "Virginia, it is well known, in the year 1784, ceded to the United States—then united only by the original articles of confederation—her vast possessions northwest of the Ohio, from which the great States of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and part of Minnesota, have since been formed. In 1787, before the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the celebrated 'ordinance,' for the government of the Northwestern Territories, was adopted by the Congress, with the full consent, and, indeed, at the express instance of Virginia. This ordinance included six definite 'articles of compact between the original States and the people and States in said territory,' which were to 'forever remain unalterable, unless by common consent.' The sixth of these articles ordains that 'there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.'"

With the invention of the cotton gin, and the consequent increase in the production of cotton, the value of slavery increased, and as a natural consequence, the people of the South

began to place a higher estimate upon it. Their interest in the institution was augmented or decreased just in proportion as it was profitable or unprofitable, which, according to the last speech of Mr. Ingalls, on the race question, in the United States Senate, was in perfect accord with the experience of New England upon this point.

As the value of slavery increased, the South put a higher estimate upon it, guarded it with greater care, and became more and more interested in privileges and restrictions with reference to its extension. For this reason, when the Territory of Missouri, which was acquired with the purchase of Louisiana from France, applied for admission to the Union as a slave State, the representatives of the South in Congress, insisted upon her admission. This Territory lay west and north of the Ohio river, from which, by a broad construction, slavery was excluded by the ordinance of 1787, although it was not included in the territory the ordinance was passed to cover, as it did not belong to the United States at that time. After a long and bitter struggle, Missouri was admitted to the Union as a slave State; but upon the condition, as a compromise, that slavery should be thereafter excluded north of thirty-six degrees, thirty minutes north latitude.

This settlement of the question was permitted to stand for thirty years, and until California, which was a portion of the territory taken from Mexico, applied for admission to the Union as a free State.

It was claimed by the South that the line established by the Missouri compromise should be extended to the Pacific Ocean, thus making territory open to the introduction of slavery of the greater portion of California, which was applying for statehood under an anti-slavery constitution. She was finally admitted to the Union as a free State, but her admission, like that of Missouri, was a compromise measure, which contained provisions with reference to slavery as follows: First, the establishment of Territorial governments in New Mexico and Utah without any restriction as to slavery; second, a declaration that slavery should not be abolished in the District of Columbia; third, the prohibition of the slave trade in the District; and fourth, a more effective fugitive slave law.

At this distance from the times in which these important

measures were passed, it is difficult to explain on what consistent rule of reason or right the South insisted upon the extension to the Pacific Ocean of the territorial line established by the Missouri compromise, as affecting the territory taken from Mexico, after opposing the extension of the line established by the ordinance of 1787 over the territory acquired from France. In the light of history, looking to the interest of the South, and upon the presumption that slavery was a necessity, it was a mistake, in so far as it was intended to increase the spread of slavery. As a matter of policy it was fatal, as subsequent history shows that "the aggressiveness of the slave power" was held up to the people of the North as one of the most potent factors in creating sentiment against the tendencies and arousing opposition to the institution of slavery. This history also furnishes a striking example of the spirit of conciliation, concession and compromise displayed by Northern representatives in Congress, for the purpose of preserving the Union, no matter what was done about slavery. Up to the time the compromise measures of 1850 were adopted, the conservatism of Northern and Southern men had saved the Union without destroying slavery. This was the last occasion upon which their counsels were to triumph. They were soon to be pushed aside and the country was to be turned over to men, who, through madness or folly, plunged it into revolution and war.

During the administration of Mr. Pierce, although both political parties were pledged not to re-open the slavery question, and he had renewed this pledge on his own behalf in his first message to Congress, the Missouri compromise—practically abrogated by the compromise of 1850—was formally repealed by one of the provisions of the famous Kansas-Nebraska bill. The passage of this bill, as an administration measure, rekindled the sectional fires of 1850, and marked two important eras—the beginning of the end of slavery, and the formation of the Republican party. The people of the North saw that the work of three quarters of a century in restricting the spread of slavery had, within four years of the compromise of 1850, been swept away. They regarded the repeal of the Missouri compromise as an act of bad faith on the part of the South, and despairing of any permanent settlement of this question by concessions, they resolved, without reference to past differences, to use the

strength of numbers, which they possessed, to restrict the further spread of slavery, in the interest of Union and peace.

The Republican platform of 1860, upon which Mr. Lincoln was nominated and elected, set out as its first declaration, that: "The propriety and necessity for its organization had been fully established by the history of the four preceding years, which, more than ever before demand its peaceful and constitutional triumph."

In order to assure the conservative men of the North that it was not proposed to interfere with slavery where it already legally existed, in its fourth declaration of principles, it re-affirmed the doctrine of non-interference with slavery in the slave States, and denounced insurrection and violence as follows: "That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State, to order and control its own domestic institutions, according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of powers on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depends, and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes." The final history of this great contest is told in few words. Mr. Lincoln was elected, the Southern States seceded, the war ensued, the Union was saved, and slavery and secession were buried in a common grave.

Passing from the causes of the war, it is proper to consider the motives and methods through which it was produced, and what it accomplished. At the outset, candor compels the statement, that, during the entire controversy with reference to slavery, the Federal government did not, by a single act, up to the time of the war, interfere in the slightest degree with slavery in any State where it existed. On the contrary, it refused to do so, defining the authority of both the State and Federal governments touching this question, in the following resolution, which was passed by the first United States Congress in 1790:

"Resolved, That Congress have no authority to interfere in the emancipation of slaves, or in the treatment of them in any of the States, it remaining with the several States alone to provide rules and regulations therein, which humanity and good policy require."

This action was taken upon the presentation of petitions

from Pennsylvania and other States, praying that Congress should "Promote the abolition of slavery by such powers as it possessed." This resolution was ever afterwards regarded as the law upon this subject, by which the Federal authorities were to be guided. Neither did the Federal government, on any occasion, seek to escape the duty laid upon it, of protecting the South in the property of its slaves. As there was no evidence of any disposition to interfere with slavery in any of the States where it existed, or to evade the responsibility or duty of its protection in the interest of these States, secession was not demanded by the necessities of the case, for the safety of slavery in the slave States. If the right existed, which I did not believe then and do not believe now, it could not have been wisely invoked for the protection of slavery in the slave States. By reason of extensive borders, it would have been impossible for the Southern Confederacy, predicated on slavery, to have protected it against the people of the North solidified against it by the war, and dominating the policies of a government so powerful as that of the United States. This view of the case was entertained by Southern men in 1860, and, as many believe, by a majority of Southern men. Furthermore, the controversy within the Union was not with reference to slavery in the slave States, but over the right of the South to introduce it into the territories. If its defense and protection in the slave States was impossible inside of a Union of friendly States, and between which there was no controversy, except with reference to its extension, it was the height of folly to suppose that the States opposed to its extension in the territories of the Union, would surrender any portion of their territory to a foreign power for this purpose. The South did not contemplate the acquisition of any of the territories by conquest, nor that they would be peacefully surrendered to her, and yet without them, without the privilege of introducing slavery into new territory, she was waging war for less than nothing, if the Union, as I believe, gave better guarantees for the protection of slavery than the Confederacy ever offered, or could have offered. In support of this view of the case, that the ostensible purpose was to defend slavery in the slave States, the South, through her foremost secession leaders, announced, again and again, that "All she asked for was to be let alone."

Whatever may be said with reference to the right of any

of the original States to secede, this right, if it existed at all, did not belong to those States organized from territory purchased with money from the United States treasury. Of this class of States there were seven in the Confederacy, and this fact was alluded to by Mr. Justice Lamar, in his Calhoun oration at Charleston some years ago. The theory of secessionists was, that the money which purchased this territory belonged to the people of all the States, and, when these States were admitted into the Union, they came in upon the same basis, and with all the rights and privileges of the original thirteen. This was true, but a portion of the people did not have the right, arbitrarily, to take the property that belonged to all of them. Neither did admission to the Union upon terms of equality with the original States carry with it the right to secede, for no such right was admitted as belonging to the original States. If it had existed, Congress would have revoked it in admitting the States formed from territory purchased by the Federal government. It is preposterous to suppose that the government would have consented to vest these territories with the right to take themselves out of the Union, by virtue of their admission into the Union. Upon the secession theory of their acquisition of rights by virtue of admission to the Union, they could dissever themselves from it by joining it, when this could not be accomplished legally in any other way.

There were other reasons than those assigned to the people of the South, why some of the Southern leaders desired secession. With or without slavery, they wanted to destroy the Union. In a speech delivered at Richmond, April 10, 1861, after South Carolina had secede, Roger A. Pryor said: "Gentlemen, I thank you especially that you have at last annihilated this accursed Union," and again, "For my part, gentlemen, if Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin to-morrow were to abdicate their offices, and were to give me a blank sheet of paper to write the conditions of re-annexation to the defunct Union, I would scornfully spurn the overture." This language indicates the spirit with which the extremists of the South, the third division, were inspired. They were doubtful about but one thing, and that was, the action of the great body of our people. But the methods to be employed in forcing them into secession were also indicated by Mr. Pryor, who further said: "Do not mistrust Virginia. As

sure as to morrow's sun will rise upon us, just so sure will she be a member of this Southern Confederation; and I tell you, gentlemen, what will put her in the Southern Confederation in less than an hour by Shrewsbury clock—*strike a blow*. The very moment *blood is shed*, old Virginia will make common cause with her Southern sisters of the South." This idea, if original with Mr. Pryor, was entertained by others. Mr. Clemens, of Alabama, in speaking at Huntsville, in 1864, said: "In 1861, shortly after the Confederate government was put in operation, I was in Montgomery. One day I stepped into the office of the Secretary of War, General Walker, and found Mr. Davis, Mr. Memminger, Mr. Benjamin, Mr. Gilchrist, a member of our legislature from Lowndes county, and a number of other prominent gentlemen. They were discussing the propriety of immediately opening fire upon Fort Sumpter, to which General Walker, the Secretary of War, appeared to be opposed. Mr. Gilchrist said to him, 'Sir, unless you sprinkle blood in the face of Alabamians, they will be back in the Union in less than ten days.' The next day General Beauregard opened his batteries on Sumpter, and Alabama was saved to the Confederacy." In the estimation of this class of Southern men, the conservatism of the people of Virginia and Alabama, and their devotion to the Union, however much they were interested in and devoted to the institution of slavery, would cause them to hesitate, if they did not finally refuse to adopt the doubtful expedient, and, if possible, the still more doubtful principle of secession. Hence they were anxious for the shedding of blood, in order that madness might accomplish the work that reason could not sanction.

There were other motives still, by which extremists among the Southern leaders were influenced, although these motives were carefully hidden from the people of the South. These were purely partisan and political, and were evidenced by prominent Cotton States' secessionists, who, according to current reports at the time, met in Richmond, Va., years in advance of secession, to consider the formation of a Confederacy, to be composed exclusively of the Cotton States, and in which they certainly contemplated enjoyment of the greatest powers and highest honors this Confederacy could bestow. They were impatient of the conservatism of the border states, and ambitious for supreme and permanent [illegible] political ascendancy and power. If the original

purpose to form a Cotton States' Confederacy was afterwards changed, it was no doubt because the scepter of intellectuality, wielded by a brilliant, arrogant, and intolerant minority, was relied upon to measurably intimidate and silence the border States, until the time came to test upon their hesitating people the potent influence of blood.

It was understood by Mr. Pryor and the faction for which he spoke, that patriotic men of both sections were earnestly at work to save the Union and avoid war. They also understood that the shedding of blood, if it did not defeat their patriotic and humane purposes, would render still more difficult the task they had undertaken. At the time Mr. Pryor was speaking at Richmond, what was proposed by Congress as the thirteenth amendment to the Constitution was pending before the legislatures of many of the States. This measure was the result of patient and earnest work on the part of a joint Congressional committee, the purpose of which was to grant the South absolute security for the future, for slavery in the slave States. This amendment declared that "no amendment shall be made to the Constitution which will authorize or give to Congress the power to abolish or interfere within any State, with the domestic institutions thereof, including persons held to labor or service, by the laws of said States." It passed the House by a majority of 133 to 65, and the Senate by 24 to 12. Mr. Blaine states in his "Twenty Years in Congress," that only 12 out of 25 Republican Senators voted against it. If the shedding of blood could have been prevented for three months longer, the spirit manifested in this amendment to the Constitution would have prevailed, and we would have escaped the waste and ruin of a great war.

Slavery might have been abolished in time, but emancipation would not have been immediate or compulsory, or without compensation.

But there is another side to this question, which the truth of history requires should be presented. If Southern extremists were opposed to the Union, or if they were not opposed to the Union but were infatuated with slavery, and after threatening its destruction on many occasions, finally made the attempt to destroy it in the interest of slavery, there were men at the North who denounced the Union as a "league with death and a covenant with hell." If the South opposed the Union because it

interfered with the extension or jeopardized the safety of slavery, the abolitionists of the North hated it because it was a defense and protection to slavery. These factions, representing antagonistic purposes with reference to slavery, desired to destroy the Union in order to destroy slavery, and to destroy the Union in order to save slavery.

The purpose to destroy the Union was an illegal purpose, no matter where, or by whom, or for what purpose it was entertained. It matters not that opposition to slavery was based upon moral sentiment. Slavery was a domestic institution in many of the States, and the Constitution gave to these States the right to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way. For this reason, any and all attempts on the part of individuals, communities or States to interfere with slavery in the slave States were in opposition to the supreme law of the land. The great body of the people North, while they were doubtless opposed to slavery, were also opposed to the violent and revolutionary methods which Wendall Phillips and his coadjutors favored for its destruction. If it was an evil, and upon this point all men were entitled to their opinions, this fact did not warrant unlawful methods for its eradication. The great body of the people South, while interested in and devoted to the institution of slavery, loved the Union, and were opposed to any attempt to destroy it in the interest of slavery. The misfortune was, that the people of both sections did not assert themselves and silence the turbulent, aggressive and lawless minorities, who were leading the people into revolution and war. The graves of five hundred thousand men who perished in our great struggle measure the needless sacrifice of human life to this lawless spirit of sectionalism and fanaticism, which should have been crushed in its inception by both State and Federal power.

The truth of history also requires the statement that present impressions, especially with young men, with reference to the unanimity with which the people of the South endorsed the doctrine of secession, or volunteered to fight for the Confederacy, are altogether erroneous. I do not believe that a majority of the people of the Cotton States would ever have voted for secession as a primal proposition, in advance of any other steps in this direction. I am confident this is true with reference to the people of Georgia. In choosing delegates to our State Convention,

which passed the ordinances of secession, there were a large number of counties in which the issue was never made. Compromise tickets were arranged, composed of men who held conflicting views with reference to this question, or of trusted men who did not commit themselves upon it. There is no evidence that this was the result of any other influence besides the disturbance and confusion in the public mind, with reference to the safety of slavery, and the value of secession as a measure for its defense. When the Convention met, the gravity of the situation was appreciated by men of all shades of opinion; but, in the struggle that ensued, the appeals to sectional hatred, and the fears of those who felt that slavery was in danger, succeeded, and secession triumphed.

If, up to this time, men differed about the right of a State to secede, or the policy of secession, if the right existed, or if these differences of opinion existed afterwards, there was unanimity of purpose in sustaining the Confederacy, by moral support, if not by personal sacrifice and service; because, whatever opinions may have been entertained as to the best means of defending slavery, whether in the Union or out of the Union, it was apparent to all men that the subjugation of the South meant the end of slavery.

The men of the South did not all volunteer to fight for the Confederacy, as the people of to-day are led to suppose, by the number of surviving Confederate soldiers who are holding office and otherwise laying claim to the consideration of Southern men, by reason of their service in the armies of the Confederacy. We have a great many more soldiers now than we had in 1862 or in 1864, if the highest official authority in the Confederacy at the time is to be credited. The war had not been in progress a year, when Mr. Davis asked the Confederate Congress to pass the now famous conscript law, which was unnecessary if Southern men were volunteering to fight for the Confederacy, and which was a reflection upon their patriotism if they were volunteering. This law was remarkable also, in that it completely overturned the sovereignty of the States, which was the cardinal doctrine of secession. In the language of Mr. Stephens, in his great speech at Savannah, after the Confederate Constitution had been adopted, slavery was the "Corner stone of the Confederacy." The war was waged in the interest of slavery, and the conscript law not

only ignored the sovereignty of the States, but was made the crowning infamy of the century, by a provision that exempted from military service, in a war for the defense of slavery, every man who owned twenty slaves. That it was neccessary to resort to conscription, or abandon the struggle to establish the Confederacy, there was no doubt, if we credit Mr. Davis with an intelligent knowledge of the situation. If statesmanship had ruled the counsels of the Confederacy, the war would have ended the moment conscription became necessary.

If the failure of Southern men to volunteer necessitated a measure so extraordinary as the conscript law, upon the testimony of Mr. Davis afterwards, it failed to bring the relief for which it was proposed, or to correct the evil at which it was aimed. In 1864 he made a speech in the Baptist church in the city of Macon, in which he stated that it required half the officers and men enrolled in the Confederate armies, for provost duty in the towns and cities in the rear, in order to keep the other half in the front. I heard that speech, and there are other men living who heard it, and some of them are probably present to-day. If this statement was true it sustains my view, that the war was not only brought on by a minority, but that the defense of the South was also left to a minority. If the statement was untrue, it was the foulest calumny ever uttered against the officers and men of the Confederate army, and Mr. Davis was incapable of doing them this great injustice. Like the necessity for conscription, this situation demanded that statesmanship should save something for the South, while negotiation and compromise were possible, and in view of the speedy collapse of the Confederacy, which was surely coming. If reason had not been dethroned, who can doubt that our leaders would, in view of the coming calamity, have endeavored to break the force of utter defeat and unconditional surrender.

In this connection, and for the purpose of showing the madness and folly that prevented negotiations that would have saved the South much that she afterwards lost, I propose to make a statement, never before publicly made, so far as I am informed, but which can be substantiated by two distinguished Georgians, who yet live. The day after the battle of Sharpsburgh, Thomas R. R. Cobb, who was a Brigadier General in the Army of Northern Virginia, went to the headquarters of his brother, General

Howell Cobb, and told him that it was evident the war would continue, if something was not done by negotiations to end it, until one side or the other was exhausted, and it was plain that the South would be first exhausted. He proposed that they should go to General Lee, and suggest that he should send a note to General McClellan, asking for a conference looking to negotiation to terminate the war. When they reached General Lee's headquarters, they found him sitting at his desk, with a note in his hand, which he had just received from General McClellan, requesting the return of the horse, equipments and side-arms of General Kearney, who had been killed a few days before at Chantilly, Virginia. General Lee doubted the wisdom of such a movement at that time, thinking that a better occasion to inaugurate it would be just after a Confederate victory, and, furthermore, was of the opinion that it would be condemned at Richmond. Howell Cobb stated to General Lee, that if he was permitted to draft a reply to the note of General McClellan, which General Lee had read to them, that he would guarantee, without making the proposal he and Tom Cobb had suggested, to bring a proposition for a conference from General McClellan. General Lee promised to think the matter over, and to send for them if he concluded to do anything, and the Cobbs left him, and, as Howell Cobb afterwards stated, General Lee was very sad.

Howell and Tom Cobb were both secessionists, but they saw the doom that was impending over the South, and desired to avert it. They never heard from General Lee afterwards upon this subject. The moment was lost, the war went on, and the South, taking counsel of men who were confident without reason, followed the course marked out for her, and staked and lost all on the future termination of a conflict, which, to the minds of Howell and Tom Cobb, was decided in September, 1862.

Upon the Federal side of this question, the purposes of those who were conducting the war, have been intentionally misrepresented North and South. With Mr. Lincoln and the great majority of the Republican party, the Union was the object, and emancipation was but an incident of the war, while, in the South the defense and perpetuation of slavery constituted the object, while secession and the Confederacy were merely incidents of slavery. If public sentiment North was finally solidified in opposition to slavery, by reason of the war waged upon the Union in

the interest of slavery, the result was favorable to the abolitionists, but was beyond their power to produce, so long as the institution was guarded and defended by the Union.

If the South was alarmed by the election of Mr. Lincoln, then, of all times, it behooved her to hold her position in the Union, thus retaining the support of the conservative men of the North, who were certain to withdraw this support whenever the South attempted to break up the Union. In support of this suggestion, the adoption of the thirteenth amendment to the Constitution, emancipating the slaves, is an evidence that the friends of the South in the Union became her opponents when she got out, or attempted to get out of the Union.

The purposes of the Republican party, as the war party, are shown by the first thirteenth amendment to the Constitution, proposed in January 1861, as well as by the platform upon which Mr. Lincoln was elected, and, furthermore, by the immortal dispatch that he sent to Horace Greely, on August 22, 1862, which I beg to quote in full: "If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could, at the same time, save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could, at the same time, destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it; if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it, and if by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race I do because I believe it helps to save this Union; and what I forbear I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I believe what I am doing hurts the cause; and I shall do more whenever I believe doing more will help the cause." The Federal Government did not wage war upon the South for the purpose of destroying slavery. It was a war for the Union, and, if the Union had not been involved, the people of the North would not have volunteered to fight the South. They would never have volunteered for the purpose of destroying slavery in the Union, for it is a matter of history, that with the Union imperiled some of the States were compelled to resort to drafts, in order to supply their quotos of troops; and these drafts, in some cases, were resisted with riot and bloodshed.

In view of this history, the African race is indebted to the secessionists of the South for emancipation. It came in the interest of Union, and was a military necessity, just as the enfranchisement of the race was a political necessity. The slave owners of the South are also indebted to the same men for the loss of the money value of slavery. If the Union had not been assailed, slavery in the slave States would have been perpetual, or emancipation would have come through the voluntary action of Southern slave holders.

There are those who believe that the war was necessary, and had to come. If the conditions that provoked it were right, or if they were unavoidable, this is true. If these conditions were wrong; if they could have been avoided by doing right, it is not true. However this may be, it came, and, whether it was born of necessity, or arose from human passion and folly, its results have passed into history, and, while we cannot change them if we would, this history is full of valuable instruction for the future.

In the language of Mr. Justice Lamar, the war accomplished two things: It established the "indissolubility of the American Union," and the "universality of American freedom." If, of the struggle to preserve the Union universal freedom was a natural consequence, which the Union leaders foresaw, their opinions coincided with the great majority of Southern men upon this point. If they did not foresee it, and favored it, because they could not resist it, they builded wiser than they knew; for, in this great stroke, although it fell with crushing effect upon the South, the only adequate cause for future sectional divisions was forever removed. It gave and will yet justify the assurance of lasting peace between the sections, and has already proven a boon to the South, in her growing diversity, through which African freeman are contributing to Southern prosperity, more than it was ever possible for us to derive from African slavery. Union and freedom were not only accomplished as results of the war; but, in a quarter of a century from its close, these results are approved by the people of the South. We would not dissolve the Union if we could; we would not restore slavery if we could. Because this is true, we confess that our estimate of slavery was wrong. We care nothing about the right of secession now, because it is not valuable as a theory for the defense of slavery,

and it never had any other value. If we are sincere, we also confess that the Confederacy was a mistake, and hence to us it is nothing but a memory, a sentiment, hallowed only by the blood of brave and noble men, sacrificed in its defense. In our love for the Union, we reject the doctrine of secession, and, in our approval of universal freedom, we repudiate the system of human bondage the Confederacy sought to perpetuate.

If an indissoluble Union and universal freedom are facts established by the war, and approved by the South, if these questions were settled by the war, there is another question that grew out of the war, and to the solution of which, in patriotic wisdom, the people of the South should address themselves, and that is the race question. We cannot profitably come to its discussion as partisans seeking the interests of party; or as sectionalists, investing it with the prejudices of a long and bitter controversy which naturally gather about it. We must bring to its consideration a patriotism broad enough to defend the institutions of the country, because they are founded upon law; and a spirit of justice that will concede to all men all of their natural and constitutional rights. No question can be settled so as to remain settled, unless it is settled right. No question, in the language of Bishop Haygood, "can be settled by a policy of repression." The interests of the white men and the colored men of the South demand its settlement, and the interests of both require that this settlement shall be legally and honestly accomplished, and, when it is settled in this way, the rights and interests of both will be protected, and, until it is settled in this way, the rights and interests of both will be jeopardized.

The negro is not responsible for residence or citizenship in this country. He was brought a captive to our shores, and sold into slavery. In patient submission, he wore the chains that were riveted upon him, and remained a passive witness for fifty years of the struggle he innocently provoked. He did not ask for freedom, nor the ballot with which to protect it. For his presence and his condition at all times, white men have been and are yet responsible. Through their avarice he was made a slave; as the result of their quarrels he was made a freeman. He is not responsible; he is not to blame. Neither does the responsibility for his introduction here rest alone upon Southern or Northern men. Both had a hand in the slave trade, and some of the people

of both sections approved and some in both opposed it. He was brought to the South in the ships of New England, and sold to our ancestors. Of this, history has kept the record, as of the war and its causes, and we cannot change it. While he came as a slave, he is now a freeman, and, nominally, a citizen, having been theoretically invested with the suffrage. This has raised the question of his influence, and its effects upon the white man's property and civilization, and the white man's right to govern for the protection of both. His investment with the right of suffrage has not so far carried with it its practical exercise. He is disfranchised in many States of the South. This is affecting not only his rights, but the status of political parties. While denying him the right to vote, the Democratic party assumes his representation, not by his will, but against his will. The political power and influence in the electoral college and in Congress, based upon his presence and citizenship, are wielded against him and against the Republican party, the party with which he naturally desires to vote. In proportion as the power of the Democratic party is augmented by this policy, the strength of the Republican party is decreased. This condition of things is a fraud upon the negroes and white men of the South, and upon the people of the country at large. It is destroying the integrity of the ballot box, and breeding contempt for law. In all these aspects, this is a serious question. Its settlement is demanded not in the interest of the negro alone, but in the interest of the people of the whole country. We cannot preserve our institutions unless the ballot box, the supreme arbiter of all public questions, is kept pure. We cannot debase it for the purpose of defeating negro suffrage, and keep it pure for other purposes. If fraud is sanctioned for one purpose, it will be practiced for others. There is no half way ground between vice and virtue, between right and wrong.

I am not called upon to discuss the policy of negro suffrage. Grant that it was a mistake, and even a crime, it is founded upon law, which must be obeyed or resisted. I neither deny nor under-estimate its evils, but they cannot be eradicated by fraud, without entailing others of larger influence. The great majority of Southern white men want honest elections, but they fear negro domination. Through this fear, they have been politically enslaved. The negro will never dominate the Anglo-Saxon in the South or elsewhere. He may be elected from a few counties to the legislatures of the Southern States, and from a few districts

to Congress. Better this than the rule of fraud through which intolerant, ignorant and corrupt politicians are enslaving white men. It is best for the negro that white men should rule. Leaving out of the question race characteristics, they are best capacitated, by experience and intelligence, for the responsibilities of government. But white men must rule by law, and in the interest of justice. We must substitute a white rule of law for a white rule of fraud. When this is done both races will divide, and the South will take her place in the Union, by the side of other sections, free to consider the great questions that from time to time must be decided, upon their merits and for the public interest, without being dominated by ignorance, through fear of negro supremacy. The States have the power to settle this question, as the right to determine the qualifications of voters yet remains with them. They did not lose this right, or any other that they ever had, by the war. So long as we do not discriminate against the negro on account of race, color or previous condition, our laws, however stringent, will be above criticism.

The Australian ballot system, and honest registration and election laws, will cure the evil of fraudulent elections, and, with this done, the race question will settle itself.

When the people of the South address themselves to this question honestly and conscientiously, for the purpose of settlement, there will be but one difficulty in the way, and that will be the condition of the white people in the black districts of the South. At this point all right thinking men are troubled. I apprehend, however, that if the proposition was carried before the country in good faith, the people of the North would consent for the government to purchase the lands in these districts at a fair price from the whites, and sell them to the blacks upon long time, and thus test the value of colonization at home in the settlement of this problem, which lies heavy upon the hearts of the people of all sections of the country. However this may be, we must appeal to the moral sense of the people of the South to right the great wrong of fraud upon the ballot box.

The duties and responsibilities of this occasion have imposed upon me the unpleasant task of reviewing an unpleasant history, as well as a delicate and difficult situation at present. Our past misfortunes have come from disobedience to written constitutions, and adherence to what we have been pleased to call higher law. By the graves of half a million of men, whose lives were sacrificed in a war that grew out of insubordination to law, by the sufferings of broken-hearted women left childless or in widowhood, by the wailings of orphanage, by the sorrows this great nation has borne, by the Union we love, and which blesses us all, I appeal to you to make the future a future of implicit obedience to law, always remembering that upon the integrity of its citizens rests the safety of the State.

"THE WAR IS OVER---LET US HAVE PEACE."

(Banquet Army of the Tennessee, Palmer House, Chicago, Thursday evening, October 8, 1891.)

In response to the toast, "The War Is Over—Let Us Have Peace," Mr. Henry Watterson spoke substantially as follows:

I believe that, at this moment, the people of the United States are nearer together in all that constitutes kindred feeling and interest than they have been at any time since the adoption of the federal constitution. If it were not so, I should hardly venture to come here and talk to you as I am going to talk tonight. As it is, surrounded though I be by union soldiers, my bridges burned and every avenue of escape cut off, I am not in the least discouraged or alarmed. On the contrary, never felt safer or happier or more at home. Indeed, I think that, supported by your presence and sustained by these commissary stores, I could stand a siege of several months and hold out against incredible odds. It is wonderful how circumstances alter cases; for it was not always so.

I am one of the many witnesses who live to tell the story of a journey to the moon and back! I may not be that I have any marvels of personal adventure or any prodigies of individual valor to relate, but I do not owe my survival to the precaution taken by a member of the confederate battery commanded by the brave Captain Howell of Georgia. It was the habit of this person to go to the rear whenever the battery got well under fire. At last Captain Howell called him up and admonished him that, if the breach of duty was repeated, he would shoot him down as he went without a word. The reply came on the instant: "That's all right cap'n; that's all right; you can shoot me; but I'll be dadburned if I'm going to let them darn'd yankees do it!" I at least gave you the opportunity to try, and I am much your debtor that, in my case, your marksmanship was so defective.

You have been told that the war is over. I think that I, myself, have heard that observation. I am glad of it. Roses smell sweeter than gunpowder; for everyday uses, the carving-knife is preferable to the bayonet, or the saber; and, in a contest for first choice between cannon balls and wine corks, I have a decided prejudice in favor of the latter!

The war is over; and it is well over. God reigns and the government at Washington still lives. I am glad of that. I can conceive nothing worse for ourselves, nothing worse for our children, than what might have been if the war had ended otherwise, leaving two exhausted combatants to become the prey of foreign intervention and diplomacy, setting the clock of civilization back a century, and splitting the noblest of the continents into five or six weak and warring republics, like those of South America, to repeat in the new world the mistakes of the old.

The war is over, truly; and, let me repeat, is well over. If anything was wanting to prove its termination from housetops and doorpath the land, that little brush we had last spring. Signor Macaroni furnished it. As to the tocsin an electric bell, the whole people rallied to brave words of the secretary of state, and, in a moment, sections and parties sunk out of sight and thought in one over-mastering sentiment—racehood and nationality.

I shall not stop to inquire whether the war has us better than we were. It certainly has us better acquainted, and, on the whole, it seems me that we are none the worse for that acquaintance. The truth is, the trouble between us was never more than skin deep; and the curious thing about it is that it was not our skin, anyhow! It was the black skin, not a white one that brought it about.

As I see it, our great sectional controversy from first to last, the gradual evolution of people from darkness to light, with no charts or to guide them, and no experience to lead the way.

The framers of our constitution found themselves unable to fix decisively and to define accurately the exact relation of the states to the federal government. On that point they left what may be described as an "open point." through that open clause, as through a door, the grim specter of discussion stalked. was attended on one hand by African slavery, the other hand by sectional jealousy, and between this trio of evil spirits, the household flower of peace was torn from the lintel and tossed into the flames of war.

In the beginning, all of us were guilty, and equally guilty, for African slavery. It was the misfortune of the north first to find out that slave labor was not profitable. So, very sensibly, it sold its slaves to the south, which, very disastrously, pursued the delusion. Time at last has done its perfect work; the south sees now, as the north saw before it, that the system of slavery, as it was maintained by us, was the clumsiest and costliest labor system on earth, and that when we took the field to fight for it, we set out upon a fool's errand. Under slave labor, the yield of cotton never reached five millions bales. Under free labor, it has never fallen below that figure, gradually ascending to six and seven, until this year it is about to reach nearly nine million bales.

This tells the whole story. I am not here to talk politics of course. But I put it to you whether that is not a pretty good showing for free black labor, and whether, with such a showing, the southern whites can afford any other than just and kind treatment to the blacks, without whom indeed the south would be a briar patch, and half our national gold income a gaping hole-in-the-ground!

Gentlemen, I beg that you will not be apprehensive. I know full well that this is neither a time nor place for abstract economics; and I am not going to afflict you with a dissertation upon free trade, or free silver. I came, primarily, to bow my head and to pay my measure of homage to the statue that was unveiled today. The career and the name which that statue commemorates belong to me no less than to you. When I follow him to the grave—proud to appear in his obsequies, though as the obscurest of those who bore any official part therein—I felt that I was helping to bury, not only a great man, but a true friend. From that day to this the story of the life and death of General Grant has more and more impressed and touched me.

I never allowed myself to make his acquaintance until he had quitted the white house. The period of his political activity was full of uncouth and unsparing partisan contention. It was a kind of civil war. I had my duty to do, and I did not dare trust myself to the subduing influence of what I was sure must follow friendly relations between such a man as he was and such a man as I knew myself to be. In this I was not mistaken, as the sequel proved. I met him for the first time beneath my own vine and fig tree, and a happy series of accidents, thereafter, gave me the opportunity to meet him often and to know him well. He was the embodiment of simplicity, integrity and courage; every inch a general, a soldier and a man: but in the circumstances of his last illness, a figure of heroic proportions for the contemplation of the ages. I recall nothing in history so sublime as the spectacle of that brave spirit, broken in fortune and in health, with the dread hand of the dark angel clutched about his throat, struggling with every breath to hold the clumsy, unfamiliar weapon with which he sought to wrest from the jaws of death a little something for the support of wife and children when he was gone! If he had done nothing else, that would have made his exit from the world an immortal epic!

A little while after I came home from the last scene of all, I found that a woman's hand had collected the insignia I had worn in the magnificent, melancholy pageant—the orders assigning me to duty and the funeral scarfs and badges—and had grouped and framed them; unbidden, silently, tenderly; and when I reflected that the hands that did this were those of a loving southern woman, whose father had fallen on the confederate side in the battle, I said: "The war indeed is over; let us have peace!" Gentlemen: soldiers; comrades; the silken folds that twine about us here for all their soft and careless grace, are yet as strong as hooks of steel! They hold together a united people and a great nation; for, realizing the truth at last—with no wounds to be healed and no stings of defeat to remember—the south says to the north, as simple and as truly as was said 3,000 years years ago in the far-away meadow upon the margin of the mystic sea: "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

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